2011 ServeSymposium
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Program Evaluation Overview

Project STAR
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Session Objectives

1. Understand relationship between *performance measurement and evaluation*
2. Review the *5 steps* of evaluation and *timeline*
3. Review the 9 basic components of an *evaluation plan*
4. Discuss and develop draft *evaluation questions*
5. Discuss resources (identifying and hiring an *internal evaluator, evaluation plan samples)*

Do I have to do an evaluation?
Consider the Strategic "Big Picture"!

- How can evaluation results be used to strengthen your programs?
  - *Branding and visibility*
  - *Sustainability and resource development*
  - *Partnerships*
  - *Maximizing impact of program resources*
  - *Continuous improvement*
- What do you want to know?
- What is the best way to get the information?

What's the difference?
Performance Measurement and Evaluation

- What is Performance Measurement?
  - *Annual snapshot of program progress*
  - *Annual tracking and reporting*
- What is Evaluation?
  - *More in-depth, rigorous effort to measure impact*
  - *May use scientifically-based research methods*

What do I do?
Five Steps in Evaluation

Step 1–Pre-Planning: Preparing for the Evaluation (the Evaluation Plan)

Step 2–Planning and Refinement: Operationalizing the Evaluation Plan

Step 3–Implementation: Collecting the Data

Step 4–Data Analysis and Reporting

Step 5–Sharing and Using Findings; Preparing for Reapplication

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Step 1—Pre-Planning

- Identify Evaluation Design and Internal or External Evaluation
- Identify Key Stakeholders and Form Evaluation Steering Committee
- Define Evaluation Questions
- Determine Evaluation Budget
- Select Evaluator or Key Staff member for oversight
- Draft the evaluation plan

Which kind of evaluation?

- **Process evaluation**, looking at implementation and operation of a program
- **Management evaluation**, a process study, looking at management and executive structures
- **Impact evaluation**, a more in-depth, rigorous effort to measure impact
  - **study designs** include: exploratory, descriptive, causal (quasi-experimental, experimental, etc.)

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Research designs for measuring outcomes or impact···

Experimental

Random assignment of like participants to two groups:

1. Treatment group receives services
2. Control group receives no services

Quasi-Experimental

Treatment group is compared to a similar group not receiving services (no random assignment)

Consider these issues···

- What decisions do we need to make? What is our timeline for making these decisions?
- What type of data do we need to convince stakeholders?
- What "standard of proof" will our audience require?
- What data are we already collecting?
- What resources do we have?

Why should I include stakeholders in designing my evaluation?

Involving stakeholders helps insure:

- Evaluation focuses on meaningful and appropriate issues
- Stakeholders understand the project and its impact
- Results are utilized for program improvement
- The evaluator/staff member can't do it alone

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What should I ask about?
Crafting Evaluation Questions

An evaluation design depends on the specific question(s) to be studied and how the evaluation results will be used.

- What does the program or funder want to know?
- What do stakeholders want to know?
- What is the project trying to accomplish?
- What questions might be asked?

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Exercise: In small groups, discuss the evaluation questions for your Evaluation Plan.

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How much is this going to cost?
Budget

- Budget and Available Resources
  - 5-10% of total project budget (or more)
  - Cost factors include evaluation consultant fees, travel, communications, printing, supplies, overhead
  - Staff oversight needs to be factored into budget

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Program Staff or Evaluator?
Be an Informed Consumer of Evaluation Services

- Why do I need to know so much if I am not conducting the evaluation?

- Is it necessary to have technical evaluation skills?

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Considerations Before Selecting an Evaluator

- What are your evaluation questions?
- What evaluation design suits your program. Does the evaluator know how to do it?
- Budget and Available Resources
- Human Resources. How will you find an evaluator? Who will do what?
- Timeframe. When is the evaluation report due?

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What do I need in my plan?
9 Components of an Evaluation Plan

1. Program Information
2. Program Summary
3. Evaluation Plan Overview
4. Audiences
5. Evaluation Questions
6. Evaluation Design/Approach
7. Data Collection (Methods and Instruments)
8. Data Management and Analysis
9. Budget
10. Other Considerations (HIPAA, IRB, etc.)

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Internet Tour

http://nationalserviceresources.org/star/ac-evaluation

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For Further Assistance

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